



College of Arts and Sciences

Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

CJCR 5140 - Forensic Document Examination Practicum

Contact Information

Instructor: Heidi H. Harralson, MA, BCDE, Dipl.

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The preferred contact method is via email. I have two email addresses and I prefer if you use spectrum008@aol.com as I read that email almost daily. I review my ETSU email account less frequently. If you need to arrange a telephonic call, please schedule a time and contact number via email first.

Format

This course is conducted 100% online. Materials will be posted to the Desire2Learn (D2L) forum. Weekly reading assignments and discussion questions will be provided in D2L.

Textbooks

Allen, M. (2016). *Foundations of forensic document analysis: Theory and practice*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

Ellen, D., Day, S., & Davies, C. (2018). *Scientific examination of documents: Methods and techniques* (4th ed.). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Harralson, H. & Miller, L.S. (2018). *Huber & Headrick's handwriting examination: Facts and Fundamentals*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Learning Outcomes & Course Objectives

At the completion of this course, the student is expected to:

- Know how to conduct a forensic document examination research experiment that will enable application of research methodology in solving forensic problems.
- Present credentials, respond to arguments and challenges, and represent the field of forensic document examination in a professional manner.

- Prepare case reports in a variety of forensic document examination problems.
- Analyze, compare, and evaluate questioned documents using accepted standards, terminology, and methodology.

Assessment

Your progress in this class will be assessed through a combination of case report assignments, reading and reaction discussions, and formal papers. There are 100 possible points in this course.

Curriculum Vitae Preparation	4%	4 points
Case Reports (6)	48%	48 points
Reaction Paper	8%	8 points
Research Paper	20%	20 points
Participation	20%	20 points

The following grading scale is used in this course:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	70-76
F	Below 70

Assignments

Curriculum Vitae (CV): The student is to prepare a curriculum vitae that outlines academic, work, and professional experience. The CV assignment is worth 4 points.

Case Reports: There are six case reports due in this course. Instructions regarding case report preparation and the materials needed to examine the case reports will be posted by the instructor in the Content section of D2L. Each case report is worth 8 points.

Reaction Paper: The writing assignment is a reaction to a critical article on forensic document examination. The student will be expected to prepare a 4-5 page reaction paper (excluding cover page and references) to the critical article which will be posted in the Content section of D2L. The paper must be formatted in APA style. The student is expected to make an argument against the points made in the critical article and support his/her position through citations of supporting literature. The reaction paper is worth 8 points.

Research Paper: The final research paper is the report of a forensic document examination (FDE) experiment conducted by the student. The subject of the experiment can be on any topic relevant to FDE. The research report must include 1) a clear thesis statement and introduction to the topic; 2) literature review; 3) methodology; 4) results; and 4) discussion and conclusion. The research paper must include a minimum of five citations from scholarly sources (peer-reviewed journals and/or academic texts) and formatted in APA style. The paper must include a cover page, abstract, reference pages, and 8 to 15 pages of text. The research paper is worth 20 points.

Discussion Questions: Cumulatively, discussions are worth 20 points. Discussions are expected to be meaningful, well-developed paragraphs in response to the discussion topic(s) posted by the instructor. The student needs to submit a minimum of one major reaction to the posted discussion and at least two responses to other students in order to earn maximum points.

Assignments can be submitted to the instructor through the “Dropbox” on D2L. If there are technical issues, I will allow submission of assignments via email but this method needs to be kept to a minimum. You may use MS Word or PDF for assignments. A letter grade will be deducted for each week that an assignment is submitted late.

Course Policies

Attendance & Participation

Students are expected to actively and regularly participate in online discussions every week. Participation is worth 20% of the overall grade and the participation grade will be posted at the end of the course. Online participation will include reactions to assigned reading materials and discussion of topics introduced by the instructor.

Academic Writing & Research

All formal papers are expected to be written in a formal, objective, and scholarly manner. Citations must come from academic sources (peer reviewed journals and academic texts). Use the ETSU online Sherrod Library link to find research citations.

All formal papers and citations must use the style published in the *Publication Manual of American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Referred to as APA style, it is widely used in the social sciences. In addition to the manual, there are several resources on the Internet about use of APA including:

<http://www.bibme.org/citation-guide/apa/>

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

Copying text without credit to the source is considered plagiarism. All formal papers including case reports are to cite material using APA style. While responses to discussion questions do not need to cite materials in as formal a format, plagiarism is not tolerated on the discussion forum. Summaries of reading material need to be written in the student's own words. If quoting material on the discussion forum, the source needs to be cited. Copying or paraphrasing the posts of other students is considered cheating and will not be tolerated on the discussion forum. Duplicate work used between classes (e.g., turning in the same or similar paper or post in more than one class) is not accepted.

If any student is caught cheating or plagiarizing on any part of the course requirements, that student may be given an F for that particular assignment or for the entire course, at the discretion of the instructor. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing may also be reported to the Dean.

Schedule

The following schedule of assignments is tentative and may be subject to change.

Date	Topic
Week 1	Introductions
Week 2	Curriculum Vitae
Week 3	Case Report 1
Week 4	Case Report 1
Week 5	Research Proposal
Week 6	Case Report 2
Week 7	Case Report 3
Week 8	Reaction Paper
Week 9	Spring Break
Week 10	Reaction Paper
Week 11	Case Report 4
Week 12	Case Report 5
Week 13	Case Report 6
Week 14	Research Paper
Week 15	Research Paper
Week 16	Grading Week